

Examiner's Amendment

1. (Currently amended) A method for processing a message in a network computing system including a facsimile transmission comprised of a recipient contact address and message content, wherein the message content includes at least one of message text and attached files, comprising:

managing multiple facsimile transmission as fax jobs in multiple fax management systems;

transferring the message content from the multiple fax management systems to a rendering computer;

launching, with the rendering computer, at least one application program to convert the message content from the multiple fax jobs to images in a file format;

transferring, with the rendering computer, the converted message content in the file format to the fax management system that sent the message content to the rendering computer; and

transferring, with the fax management systems, the message content in the file format to one of multiple communication ports for transmittal to the recipient contact address;

transferring, with the fax management servers, job numbers assigned to the fax jobs to the rendering computer;

requesting, with the rendering computer, the message content for the job numbers, wherein the fax management servers transfer the message content in response to receiving the request from the rendering computer;

maintaining, with the fax management servers, job tables including fax job records identified by job number; and

changing, with the fax management servers, state fields in the fax job records to manage the workflow of the fax jobs between the fax management system, the rendering computer, and communication port.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 1, wherein the message including the facsimile transmission further includes sender information for the sender of the fax job, wherein the rendering computer generates the content of each attachment and message text into images in the file format, further comprising:

 using the sender information to access fax cover page information for the fax jobs;
 generating a cover page image in the file format from the fax cover page information if there is fax cover page information for the sender of the fax job; and
 transmitting the converted fax cover page image to the fax management computer that sent the job number.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the file format comprises an image file format, and wherein the message content is converted to one or more images in the file format.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein for each attachment file received from the fax management computers, the rendering computer further performs:

determining one of multiple application programs capable of opening the attachment file;
and

using the determined application program to convert the content of the attachment file to one or more images in the file format, wherein all the images in the file format comprising the at least one converted attachment file are transferred to the first computing system.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising converting, with the rendering computer, the message text to at least one image in the file format, wherein the images comprising the converted attachment files are arranged in a file in the file format according to an order in which they were attached to the message and follow one image comprising the converted message text.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising maintaining, with the rendering computer, multiple application programs open to concurrently convert the content of different attachment files for fax jobs from multiple fax management computers to images in the file format.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising using, with the rendering computer, one application program to concurrently convert the content of different attachment files associated with the application program to images in the file format.

10. (Currently amended) A network computing system for processing a message in a network computing system including a facsimile transmission comprised of a recipient contact address and message content, wherein the message content includes at least one of message text and attached files in a network computing system, comprising:

(a) a plurality of fax management systems, each comprising a processor and a memory coupled to the processor;

(b) a rendering computer comprising a processor and a memory coupled to the processor;

(c) at least one communication port in communication with each fax management system;

(d) fax management program logic residing in the memory of each fax management system, wherein the fax management logic, when read and executed by the fax management processors, performs:

(i) managing multiple facsimile transmission as fax jobs in multiple fax management systems;

(ii) transferring the message content from the multiple fax management systems to the rendering computer; and

(iii) transferring the message content in the file format received from the rendering computer to one communication port for transmittal to the recipient contact address;

(iv) transferring job numbers assigned to the fax jobs to the rendering computer;

(v) maintaining job tables including fax job records identified by job number; and

(vi) changing state fields in the fax job records to manage the workflow of the fax jobs between the fax management system, the rendering computer, and communication port; and

(e) rendering program logic residing in the rendering memory, wherein the rendering program logic, when read and executed by the rendering computer processor, performs:

- (i) launching at least one application program to convert the message content from the multiple fax jobs to images in a file format; and
- (ii) transferring the converted message content in the file format to the fax management system that sent the message content to the rendering computer; and
- (iii) requesting the message content for the job numbers, wherein the fax management servers transfer the message content in response to receiving the request from the rendering computer.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently amended) The network computing system of claim 10 ~~11~~, wherein the message including the facsimile transmission further includes sender information for the sender of the fax job, wherein the rendering program logic generates the content of each attachment and message text into images in the file format, and wherein the rendering program logic further performs:

- using the sender information to access fax cover page information for the fax jobs;
- generating a cover page image in the file format from the fax cover page information if there is fax cover page information for the sender of the fax job; and
- transmitting the converted fax cover page image to the fax management computer that sent the job number.

14. (Original) The network computing system of claim 10, wherein the file format comprises an image file format, and wherein the message content is converted to one or more images in the file format.

15. (Original) The network computing system of claim 10, wherein for each attachment file received from the fax management computers, wherein the rendering program logic further performs:

- determining one of multiple application programs capable of opening the attachment file;
- and

- using the determined application program to convert the content of the attachment file to one or more images in the file format, wherein all the images in the file format comprising the at least one converted attachment file are transferred to the first computing system.

16. (Original) The network computing system of claim 15, wherein the rendering program logic further performs converting the message text to at least one image in the file format, wherein the images comprising the converted attachment files are arranged in a file in the file format according to an order in which they were attached to the message and follow one image comprising the converted message text.

17. (Original) The network computing system of claim 15, wherein the rendering program logic further performs maintaining multiple application programs open to concurrently convert the content of different attachment files for fax jobs from multiple fax management computers to images in the file format.

18. (Original) The network computing system of claim 15, wherein the rendering program logic further performs using one application program to concurrently convert the content of different attachment files associated with the application program to images in the file format.

19. (Currently amended) A signal-bearing medium containing a fax management program and rendering program for processing a message in a network computing system including a facsimile transmission comprised of a recipient contact address and message content, wherein the message content includes at least one of message text and attached files, wherein the fax management program is executed by multiple fax management computers and the rendering program is executed by a rendering computer to perform:

wherein the fax management program is capable of causing the fax management computers to perform:

(i) managing multiple facsimile transmission as fax jobs in multiple fax management systems;

(ii) transferring the message content to the rendering computer; and

(iii) transferring the message content in the file format to one of multiple communication ports for transmittal to the recipient contact address;

(iv) transferring job numbers assigned to the fax jobs to the rendering computer;

(v) maintaining job tables including fax job records identified by job number; and

(vi) changing state fields in the fax job records to manage the workflow of the fax jobs between the fax management system, rendering computer, and communication port; and

wherein the rendering program is capable of causing the rendering computer to perform:

launching at least one application program to convert the message content from the multiple fax jobs to images in a file format; and

transferring the converted message content in the file format to the fax management system that sent the message content to the rendering computer; and

requesting the message content for the job numbers, wherein the fax management servers transfer the message content in response to receiving the request from the rendering computer .

20. (Canceled)

21. (Canceled)

changing state fields in the fax job records to manage the workflow of the fax jobs between the fax management system, rendering computer, and communication port.

22. (Currently amended) The signal bearing medium of claim 19 ~~20~~, wherein the message including the facsimile transmission further includes sender information for the sender of the fax job, wherein the rendering program generates the content of each attachment and message text into images in the file format, and wherein the rendering program further performs:

- using the sender information to access fax cover page information for the fax jobs;
- generating a cover page image in the file format from the fax cover page information if there is fax cover page information for the sender of the fax job; and
- transmitting the converted fax cover page image to the fax management computer that sent the job number.

23. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 19, wherein the file format comprises an image file format, and wherein the message content is converted to one or more images in the file format.

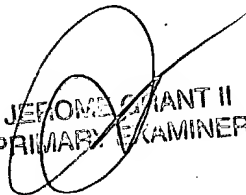
24. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 19, wherein for each attachment file received from the fax management computers, the rendering program further performs:

- determining one of multiple application programs capable of opening the attachment file;
- and
- using the determined application program to convert the content of the attachment file to one or more images in the file format, wherein all the images in the file format comprising the at least one converted attachment file are transferred to the first computing system.

25. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 24, wherein the rendering program further performs converting the message text to at least one image in the file format, wherein the images comprising the converted attachment files are arranged in a file in the file format according to an order in which they were attached to the message and follow one image comprising the converted message text.

26. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 24, wherein the rendering program further performs maintaining multiple application programs open to concurrently convert the content of different attachment files for fax jobs from multiple fax management computers to images in the file format.

27. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 24, wherein the rendering program further performs using one application program to concurrently convert the content of different attachment files associated with the application program to images in the file format.


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